

The Wallace House
Washington's Headquarters
Somerville, Somerset County, New Jersey

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of New Jersey

Historic American Buildings Survey
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133 Central Avenue, Rahway, New Jersey

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The Wallace House
Washington's Headquarters
Somerville, Somerset County, New Jersey

Owner: Revolutionary Memorial Society of
New Jersey

Date of Erection: 1778

Architect:

Builder: William Wallace

Present Condition: Good

Number of Stories: Two and one-half

Materials of Construction: Foundation - sandstone

Exterior walls - frame
construction, clapboards

Interior walls - panel
and plaster

Inside brick chimneys

Roof - pitch with composition
shingles

Historical Data:

William Wallace, the builder of the house, was a merchant of New York. He inherited the land from his father John Wallace who bought it in 1775 from the Reverend Dr. Jacob R. Hardenburgh. The

house was erected in the spring of 1778 and was considered palatial for that section of the country.

It was this house that Washington selected as his headquarters during the winter of 1778-1779 while the Continental Army was encamped near Somerville. From this house Washington issued his orders dated Headquarters, Middlebrook. Here he planned one or two important campaigns. The commander chief occupied one room on the first floor as the parlor, and one to the rear as bedroom.

Shortly after Washington took up his headquarters here, Mrs. Washington joined him. They were the first occupants of the house - as a matter of fact, it was not quite completed when Washington made it his headquarters.

We read of the General obtaining table service of queensware and candlesticks of silver from New Brunswick. Many social functions took place that winter at this house; among the people to be found there were General and Mrs. Knox, General and Mrs. Greene, Benedict Arnold, Alexander Hamilton, Baron Steuben, Lady Stirling and her daughter, Kitty, Miss Sally Winslow from Boston, Miss Ricketts, General Livingston's daughter, and many others. Mills has given a picture of the society of the Raritan Valley during that winter in which he quotes liberally from the society editor of the Pennsylvania Packet.

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